2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

those countries, he laughed me to scorn, arguing that its 823
inhabitants would have to walk with their heads downward, and must necessarily fall off; besides, the premise upon which rested the superstructure of the argument was false, inasmuch as the earth was not round, but flat, a fact patent to the naked eye.

I described a train of cars, wooden tents placed above ooo
rolling wheels, filled with a crowd of people outnumbering all his tribe, forced by the power of steam, such as he saw rise from the water boiling in his kettle, along an iron trail, faster than he ever saw the wild horse run across the prairie —endeavored to explain how they could converse, however distant from each other, through the marvelous electric telegraph, describing the immensity of their towns, the number of their warriors; in fine, whether under his own tent in the village, or encamped on the prairie after a day's hunt, he was constantly interrogating me upon some subject connected with their manners, customs, or inventions. Usually, 186
when I had concluded, the old man would remain silent a long time, absorbed in deep study, from which he would, at length, arouse and exclaim—"Wonderful! wonderful! are the works of the white man, but the Great Spirit will destroy them all!"

The Rolling Thunder evidently entertained a favorable 584 •
opinion of me. This was shown soon after my arrival in his camp, by insisting that I should take a wife. I took the matter into serious consideration, endeavoring to decide in my own mind what effect it might have on the chances of escape. The conclusion was that the effect would be favorable, and, accordingly, I signified to the chief that "Barkis was willin'."

The next step was to make a selection from the dusky daughters of the tribe, a matter about which I felt dis-

posed to be somewhat fastidious. The chief sent for some half-dozen, submitting them to my inspection, before a choice was made. Some of them were hideous, either lank and cadaverous, or fat and flabby, having a fiery red new moon painted over each eye, and the full moon in the center of the forehead. These were rejected without hesitation or ceremony. At length one was brought that was pronounced entirely satisfactory. She was small and slender, very young and very agile. There was the grace of nature in her carriage, and, besides, she was not quite as filthy as her companions. She was arrayed in the latest Indian fashion when brought in for examination, wearing prettily embroidered moccasins, colored leggins, calico short gown of many colors, with a great diversity of beads braided profusely in her hair. She was distinguished as the most expert swimmer and deepest diver in the tribe; wherefore, they had bestowed upon her the name of *To-ma-no-a-ku-no*, the Sleek Otter. Altogether, she was rather a dirty but very comely maiden, in no wise equal to Kianceta, the Weasel, but much fairer than the great majority of her race. With her I entered into the holy estate of matrimony for the space of one moon. After the wedding festivities, the squaws generously assisted her in building a tent, bringing in presents of buffalo skins wherewithal to construct it, after the fashion of a donation party; and when it was finished, we moved in and "went to keeping house." The Sleek Otter made me a faithful and affectionate wife, skinned the deer, cooked the venison, pounded the corn, mended my moccasins, and in all respects performing her conjugal duties with cheerfulness and alacrity. The course of true love ran so smooth that we glided harmoniously through the third moon, and, therefore, became irrevocably joined.

Subsequent to the marriage my privileges were very much

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

In fact, girls were often married off to middle-aged men who could give a good bride-price. The average age at marriage for girls is said to have been sixteen, while for boys it was twenty-five to thirty.

Although youngsters were not subject to moral censure for sexual activity, it was not encouraged. Boys, during the period of their pre-adolescent gang life, ignored the girls to a great degree. At adolescence, when they got their own tipis, they became positively bashful. It was proper for girls and women to make sexual advances, but not for a well-mannered boy. "Boys seemed to stay pretty much to their tipis," said Post Oak Jim. "It was the girl's place to come to them." Bolder, unmarried older girls might crawl in a boy's tipi at night to initiate him in lovemaking. In the dark these girls commonly kept their identity anonymous, for it would not help their reputations to be known.

The Comanche pattern of social conduct, in theory, prohibited young couples from being seen together. In response to the query of what would have happened if they had been found together, informants replied, "It would have been too bad." In practice, however, they did find opportunity to be in each other's company. More romances probably began where the girls went for water and wood than any other place. When a young lover became fond of a girl, he waited near where she might pass. When she approached, he stepped toward her, watching for an encouraging sign that his attentions might be welcome. If she was not interested, the girl made the fact known through her actions, and he went away much mortified. If the girl were favorably inclined, they agreed by a sign, mutual understanding, or orally on a time and a meeting place. If no older people were near, they might spend a while together. Again, they might agree to meet after dark. Sometimes a girl allowed a boy to come to her tipi. The more bashful boys lay outside, whispering to the girls inside, but they might be bold enough to crawl under the tipi and lie with them. More often, however, the girl crawled out and went a short distance away with her suitor. Supposedly no one else knew, but informants felt that certainly the girl's mother must at times have been aware of what was taking place. Most courting was done when the girl slipped out of the tipi and met the boy at night.[12]

[12] Informants: Medicine Woman; See How Deep the Water Is. Statements by Marcy, Dodge, Parker, and others are substantially in agreement.

The Comanches

584 A youngster whose heart was too faint to approach a girl on his own account sought out an old and distantly related woman and put his plight to her. It was up to her secretly to arrange a tryst with the girl of his heart. Thomas Gladwin reports that this service was supplied by a boy's sister, but our informants specifically denied this possibility.[13] "It would make people too suspicious." Furthermore, it seems quite unlikely that a sister would be sent on a mission with sexual implications.

It was after they had got over the first pangs of adolescence that vain young men took to the *tuiβitsi* pattern of showing off. It was a show-off for the girls collectively, however, for no Comanche boy could decently reveal a public display of interest in one girl.

It was good tactics for a young man who had fallen in love with a maiden to seek the acquaintance and to cultivate the friendship of her brother, or some other near relative, or the person who controlled her marriage. If the suitor and the girl's brother were together on the warpath, the suitor might give the brother arrows or a horse and in various ways try to make things easy for him, addressing him as *nɜmɜaʕa*, "our children's uncle," i.e., the brother of my offspring's mother—a subtle hint of things he hoped to come.[14] This could lead the brother to speak a favorable word at home in behalf of his friend—of his bravery, his strength, his ability as a hunter or raider, and other commendable qualities. He might even extend an invitation to the friend to come to his family's lodge. The suitor was also likely to offer the girl gifts, including horses, in an effort to win her favor.

583 When a suitor had decided that he wanted a certain girl for a wife, he made a present to the girl's brother, her father, or her guardian. The most acceptable gift was a horse. In a few cases a boy was known to work (hunt or raid) for the family of the girl he wanted for a wife for as much as one, two, or three years.[15] In any event, sons-in-law were obligated to provide meat for their wives' parents. There was also love medicine known to certain practitioners who could be [832] induced to charm the girl on behalf of a petitioner so that she could not resist his suit.

[13] Thomas Gladwin, "Comanche Kin Behavior," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. L (1948), 73–94.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Informant: Kills Something; see also Smithwick, *op. cit.*, 183.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

From Cradle to Grave

Under the system of contract and sororate and levirate marriages which prevailed, a girl was often bestowed upon a man many years her senior and not of her own choosing. According to the ideal pattern she adjusted herself to the arrangement. Although it was a common belief among the older Indians that such marriages were more successful and lasting than those which were formed of romantic liaison, many young people sought love-mates of their own choosing: adultery, desertion, and wife absconding were rife and lead to a lively legal picture of strife and process. 584 ●

In any case a man was not likely to press his suit unless given encouragement by the maiden or by her family. If he gave presents to her brother or father or worked for them for a time, he would eventually be asked why he had made the gifts and what he was looking for. Then he would reply that he wanted the girl for a wife. Some informants insist that when the request was made of a girl's brother in this fashion, the brother had to consent—"It was the law." He knew what the man was after and should not have taken the gifts if he did not intend to grant his request. Others say that he had to consent only in case the two were on the warpath at the time the request was made.

In most cases the suitor did not himself ask for the girl directly, but secured a mediator, in the person of an uncle, an aged relative, or a friend, to make an offer to the parents or brother as compensation for their daughter or sister. The messenger took horses or other goods to the lodge of the girl's parents. After some polite and aimless talk, he came to the point, then left forthwith, without getting an answer, so as to avoid the possible embarrassment of a refusal to his face. Sometimes the father or brother made the decision; sometimes they would call in other members of the family. The girl's wishes might or might not be respected in the matter, for she must accept the husband chosen for her. Informants maintain that a father or a brother had a legal right to kill a girl who refused to accept a husband they had selected. If the suitor was rejected, his horses were simply turned loose and driven back to his herd; if accepted, they were driven to the herd of the girl's father or brother. This was sufficient announcement of engagement.

Occasionally a boy brought the horses to the door of his prospective

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

bride himself and waited near by without saying a thing to see if his gift were acceptable. Of course, the girl and her family knew from whom the proffered gift came even if the owner were not visible. Sometimes the girl was dressed up and brought out of the lodge right away and handed over to the suitor, who came forth to accept his prize when he saw that his gift was accepted. At other times the suitor tied his riding horse at the maiden's lodge door and waited out of her sight. If she wished to reject him, she merely turned the horse loose, but if she drove it to the herd, the act signified her willingness to accept the owner and was symbolical evidence that she was willing to take charge of his horses and other property. This simple ceremony seems to have been used frequently even after the herd had been placed in front of the girl's door.[16]

In most cases there was no further ceremony. The bridegroom took the bride to his tipi. There was no necessity for any religious ceremony, no demonstration. If circumstances permitted, there might be feasting and, occasionally, dancing. There is evidence that an occasional marriage did receive official sanction either from the chief, who had the announcement made to the camp, or from the council. The scanty evidence available does not make clear whether these were customary practices of specific bands or whether it was a matter of individual taste, as a public or private ceremony in our own society.

Another form of ceremony which has been reported is that after the horses had been delivered and accepted, the bridegroom killed one of the least valuable, removed the heart, and hung it at the door of his betrothed. After the bride roasted and divided it into equal parts, it was eaten by the couple. The heart of a buffalo or other animal could be substituted.[17]

When a girl learned that a rich suitor whom she did not care to marry was about to propose, she might elope with the man she loved. Couples occasionally eloped when the boy was poor and unable to

[16] This description of obtaining a wife is compiled from statements by informants Kills Something, See How Deep the Water Is, and Medicine Woman; also, Battey, *op. cit.*, 328; Gregg, *op. cit.*, 431–32; Daniel A. Becker, "Comanche Civilization," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. I (1923), 250; Mooney, "Calendar History of the Kiowas," *loc. cit.*, 231–33; R. B. Marcy, *Thirty Years of Army Life on the Border*, 49; Lehmann, *op. cit.*, 177–79; Agent Charles Adams to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 12, 1890 (Oklahoma Historical Society Library, correspondence file K–33, p. 414).

[17] Gregg, *op. cit.*, 431–32.

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca. 1870]

and he may mutilate or beat her to the full extent of his capricious will. 593
In certain cases he is even permitted to take her life, without acknowledging responsibility to any one for his conduct. As among civilized people, 684
there are "common women of the tribe," outcasts from respectable Comanche society, just as there are outcasts from Christian society among the civilized people of Europe and America. These "Women" have no rights which Comanche ladies and gentlemen are bound to respect. The condition of slavery, which falls to the lot of all women of the tribe, is intensified in the case of the fallen. The others are slaves of one master only; these have many masters and many mistresses. According to our code of morals, the Comanche cyprian has been guilty of no crime, which all the females of the tribe who have arrived at the age of puberty have not committed. She has been unfaithful to the marriage contract, without consulting the wishes of her husband, and without bringing him any gain, and terribly is she made to suffer for it. She is beaten, with many stripes, [304]
and not infrequently suffers mutilation by having her nose cut off. This fixes the brand of her disgrace; and henceforth she becomes the slave of the tribe. There may always be seen a few of these miserable creatures about a Comanche camp. The women are especially cruel toward them, and take much apparent delight in beating them. And yet these same immaculate maidens and matrons have not once, but many times been made to endure the embrace of any purchaser at the behest of their husbands and fathers.

Custom has established laws among the Comanches as among more civil- 671
ized people. It is a law among them that a wife may be mutilated, or even 593
killed, for the crime of infidelity, and yet husband is not averse to select- 684
ing any number of lovers for her and compelling her to accept them, pro- 837
vided his worldly fortune is advanced thereby.

There is no prudish seclusion of Comanche maidens. They mingle with 834
great freedom among the people of their tribe. They may have their 584
beaux as well as their white sisters, and the gallants need have no fears of an over-prudent papa, or an irate "big brother." If there is a rough place in the course of the stream of affection, it is not the youth but the maiden that must suffer the castigation. A pony will suffice to satisfy the utmost requirements of the social law.

When a young Comanche gentleman takes it into his head to go a-wooing, 584
he decks himself with a profusion of paint, a gorgeous head-piece made 301
of feathers; dons his finest suit, puts on all the decorations of distinction 291
which he is entitled to wear, which usually consist of a necklace of wild- 237
cats' claws, coyotes' tails, the canine teeth of wolves, elks' teeth, and not

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 N06 Comanche N06
(ca. 1870)

584 unfrequently the talons and beaks of the prairie eagles and falcons, a breast-
301 plate of "hair pipe," and perhaps a few bright plates of metal cut into the
291 form of crosses and crescents and sewed to his gorgeously colored suit of
237 dressed skins. So attired, with his face sometimes painted brown, or blue,
584 and at other times flaming in vermillion colors, or yellow as the victims
302 of "the plague of the Indies," the Comanche beau mounts his pony and proceeds to the lodge of his inamorata, dismounts, and, if the maiden comes and hitches his pony, enters and squats upon the ground; and displays his discontent with his lot by responding to every inquiry with a most dolorous
584 "Ugh! Ugh!" After manifesting his misery to an extent deemed sufficient, the Comanche young gentleman rises with great dignity, and repeating two or three knell-like "Ugh! Ughs!" he remounts and rides off without so much as deigning to utter a word. If the maiden he desires to woo does not take charge of his pony, that ends the courtship. He would despise himself and be the fool of the tribe to persist under such circumstances.

An account of this visit is carefully certified to the master of the lodge, on his return. Our dandy, like many civilized gallants, is always very careful to make his initiatory visit when paterfamilias is not at home. The way is now open for further negotiations. The girl is not usually again consulted. The young dandy has merely condescended to indicate his prefer-
584 ence for her. She of course must be delighted. If the father is a chief or
583 principal man in the tribe, he provides a dower for the daughter. The young suitor must be able to respond in equal measure in the way of presents of this world's goods. Sometimes a Comanche belle may have, as a portion, as many as fifty ponies. The suitor in such case should be prepared to turn over fifty-one ponies as a present to his would be father-in-law.
[583] If this can be done, a bargain is usually concluded. No further ceremony is necessary. The maiden and her fifty ponies become the absolute property of the young man. He has "swapped" fifty-one ponies for fifty ponies and got a wife, or rather slave, into the bargain.

585 When negotiations have been concluded, the dandy proceeds to the lodge of his bride, but not in the same plight as before. He enters, throws down his deer skin mantle, casts from him his weapons, and then orders the bride to enter upon her duties as a wife and slave by taking them up and proceeding to follow him to his own lodge, bearing the burdens he has thrown down for her.

[595] The bride may have three or four sisters, and they may all be wives
606 of her husband before the expiration of a week. Mothers-in-law excite
585 little feeling, either of favor or aversion, among the Comanches. They play a minor part in the affairs of the newly constituted households.

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6

ambiguity of powers of the chieftains, it is not surprising that in this tribe there were no public officials endowed with law-speaking or law-enforcing authority. The law of the Comanche was neither legislative nor judge-made. It was, as we have written elsewhere, "hammered out on the hard anvil of individual cases by claimant and defendant pressing the issues in terms of Comanche notions of individual rights and tribal standards of right conduct."[3] Thus it was almost exclusively a system of private law: a system of individual responsibility and individual action; a law that was case made.

The Comanches surely had no love of legalistic formalism, but they were a most litigious people. Their way of life engendered considerable internal friction. It might almost be said that the Comanches savored trouble-making. Their own accounts of their war parties as often as not begin with a laconic "once there was a bunch of Comanches out looking for trouble."

So, also, a man was often moved to take steps that made trouble. He stole another man's wife, or he secretly consorted with her. When this was done, the husband had no choice but to initiate legal action. Magnanimity on his part would bring no praise, for there was no doctrine of turning the other cheek. A man's status turned on his bravery, and for an offended husband not to act reflected merely on his courage; it was seen not as an act of forgiveness but as an expression of lily-livered cowardice. Wife-stealing and adultery were not the result of any sexual deprivation on the part of the offender; they were in effect deliberate challenges to the prestige of the husband. As such, he was forced in the eyes of the people to respond to them.

The way was open to him in legal action. Custom impelled men to violate the marital rights of other men. The culture also provided a legal remedy for the wronged man. Except in a few rare and extreme cases, the wrongdoer fully expected to pay the legal price—and did so without forcing the injured husband to a violent bodily attack. He knew well that he would have to pay a price, but he also knew that if he was steadfast and could outface the other man, the price would be light. In that case he would come out of the affair with greater public respect than the husband and he might get the woman to boot. So he took the risk.

In the memory of a dozen old Comanche informants still living in 1933 forty-five cases of old-time legal actions involving wife-stealing and adultery were still vivid enough for detailed recording.[4] Twenty-two were wife-absconding cases and twenty-three involved adultery.

As it takes two to make a contract it also takes two to commit adultery or a wife-absconding (Comanche women were not forcibly stolen). The woman's role in these affairs was very frequently an expression of individual revolt against the workings of Postulate III.[A] Theoretically in all instances,

[3] Wallace and Hoebel, p. 224.

[4] Cf. Hoebel, *Political Organization and Law-ways*, pp. 49–59.

A [see category 181, p. 69--Analyst]

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6

and actually in many, a girl had no formal voice in the choice of her husband. Her brothers gave her away in exchange for a consideration. The takers were usually older and established warriors and hunters who had the goods. In the Comanche ideal such arrangements made for the best marriages. But they were marriages in which the woman was at the mercy of her husband. Working against the stability of such marriages was a strong current of romantic idealism among the young. The ambition of the adolescent girl was to be a *naiβi*,[5] i.e., a beautiful maiden with lustrous, black hair hanging in long braids, and dressed in a fine fringed buckskin dress. The young bucks for their part strove to attract the attention of the girls by playing the role of *tuiβitsi*: "a handsome young man who looks good on a horse." Wife-absconding was really an escape in which a frustrated wife sought a more romantic match with a daring warrior.

Comanche elopements were invariably linked to a war party. The man in the case would be going on a raid with his friends, and he would make an assignation with the woman to go along. It was a way provided by custom to violate the marriage rights of the rightful husband as defined by custom and sustained by law! A nice example of internal inconsistency in the ways of a culture.

When a woman and her lover took off with a war party, two courses were open to the jilted husband. He could mount in hot pursuit in the hope that he could overtake them before they reached enemy territory. Or he could bide his time until they returned from the raid. In enemy country he could not press his suit; here all Comanches had to stand shoulder to shoulder. Aside from this, he could institute his action wherever he might be able to confront his tortfeasor. He might take along some compatriots—brothers, real or putative—to strengthen his courage and his arm, if need be. A real man, however, went alone. It was not necessary for him to gather witnesses, for a Comanche legal action was in no sense a trial. Questions of evidence rarely, if ever, entered. The wife-stealer, or even the adulterer, had no desire to conceal his deed; his aim was to flaunt his prestige in the face of the challenged husband.

If he followed the dictates of decorum, he politely addressed the defendant as "brother." The defendant replied in kind. Did not Comanche brothers share their wives? Syllogistically the reasoning runs:

> Men who share a wife are brothers.
> This man has assumed a share in my wife.
> Therefore, he is my brother.
> (But he is going to pay for the privilege!)

The immediate goal of the prosecuting husband was to get *nanewɔkə*, restitutive damages. As an opening gambit he placed his demands high,

[5] Phonetic symbols are used as in the International Phonetics System.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

115 159 584 Well, my brother was chumming around with this young boy. He was about nineteen and he went to Fort Sill School. And my brother, he go down there and come home with him sometimes. Finally, that summer when school was out, he brought that young man home with him and he stayed with us all summer. My mother said, "You better get married to this boy. He's a nice boy. He always helping with everything, and he might work for us if you get married to him." I didn't have no sense enough to . . . I mean I don't think about love, or anything like that. So I said, "If he wants to marry me, I marry him." So my mother said, "Do you want to marry my daughter?" and he said, "Yeah, I'll marry her." And that's the way I got married. They just give their kids away like that. If you ask anybody, "Do you want to marry my daughter?" They say, "Yeah." That's your husband . . . just like that.

115 159 Sanapia had one son, and shortly after his birth she left her first husband at the urging of her mother. She married again within a year and remained married to her second husband until his death in the early 1930s. She had a son and a 115 daughter by her second husband. Following the death of her second husband, 159 Sanapia's life took on a tone which is recalled most vividly by those who wish to 154 discredit her. During this time her violent bursts of temper, excessive drinking, 763 sexual promiscuity, and zest for gambling won for her a notoriety which has 593 never entirely left her. She talks of those years as "the time I was roughing it out."

Sanapia's second husband was apparently her favorite. He is also the only one of her spouses which she refers to as "husband." She was emotionally very ravaged by his death. It is interesting that the more tradition-oriented informants will mention Sanapia's misbehavior after his death but add no note of blame, simply emphasizing her grief. Kardiner (1945:77) makes the following statement, when discussing a Comanche woman's behavior after the death of her child. Perhaps the reaction to the death of a loved husband could correspond to the same pattern.

> After the death of a child a young woman who had previously been entirely respectable would become exceedingly active sexually and would have a whole series of affairs. This behavior, which sometimes lasted two or three years, was recognized as a sort of psychotic state and did not result in the same sort of difficulties that accompanied elopement or break-up of a marriage. The husband would feel sorry and would wait until she recovered and then resume the regular marriage relationship.

115 159 756 It was during the years when Sanapia was "roughing it out" that she first attempted to employ her doctoring skills. She was approached by a sister who wished Sanapia to doctor her sick child.

> She came to visit me one day when I was around here. She rolled a smoke with that Bull Durham and handed it to me, and I took it. I didn't even think what she was here for, but then I knew. She ask me to doctor her sick baby. I got so nervous I just start to shake all over and I told her to go away because I was feeling shame, I guess. Then I start to think what my mother told me, how I couldn't refuse nobody, so I went with her. I kept thinking that I couldn't do no good, but you know, I got that baby well. I thought that was some kind of sign, so I thought that I might try to make something out of this doctoring.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

One afternoon in the late 1930s I drove into the little town of Faxon on business for a client. When I got out of the car, I was face to face with Charley Ross. It had been long since I had talked with him, and my happiness at meeting him appeared to be matched by his at seeing me. For a Plains Indian he was truly an old man—somewhere in his seventies. We sat down on the running board of the car, and dusk found us still sitting there. I had forgotten I had a client, and Charley had forgotten that the daughter with whom he lived would be worried about his being out in the raw, chilly evening air.

I had it in mind to ask him many questions about himself, other questions about old Comanche friends of whom I had lost track, and yet other questions about Comanches in general. But he too had questions, and insistent ones. He knew I had become a lawyer, of course, but mostly he wanted to know about my children—for what place in life they had fitted themselves.

When he learned that my oldest son was already a lawyer and the younger son was preparing for law school, he grinned with pleasure. My father was the first magistrate appointed after the opening, and his jurisdiction had stretched for twenty or more miles in any direction. To Charley that meant Dad had been learned in the law. Then I had followed in the law profession, and now two sons were following me. To Charley, this progression was wonderful.

He was equally pleased to match up my daughters with his. My oldest was on the faculty of a small college, and the younger was teaching in a high school. Both his daughters were teachers and had married teachers.

Another Carlisle product who launched himself into the white man's life stream and kept himself afloat was one of Quanah Parker's sons. But then, he had a motive. He was in love.

Chief Quanah Parker's house was about three miles from the little town of Cache, Oklahoma. Some Texas cattlemen had settled him in a kind of apartment house just south of the Wichita Mountains, where West Cache Creek breaks out into the prairie. He was recognized by the government as chief of the Comanches. Like all the older Indians married to more than one wife, he had been allowed to keep his four or five remaining wives. One son was a Methodist minister, one daughter was married to a minister, and two other daughters married well-to-do white men.

The father of the Carlisle son's sweetheart had been a missionary

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

584 to the Comanches. The girl told young Parker that if it was his intention to live around Cache, become another Carlisle loafer, and bask in the reflection of his father's glory, she wasn't interested. But if he was willing to go away and live where people had never heard of the Comanches or of Quanah Parker, she would marry him.

Quanah's son agreed to leave Oklahoma, and they married and moved to Florida. The one thing young Parker could think of that 472 he would have the nerve to try was driving a baggage wagon. So they bought a team and a light dray, and he began hauling baggage and making light deliveries. He made a living from the start, and in time built a first-class transfer business.

177 But Charley Ross and Quanah Parker's son were exceptions. As a lawyer in Oklahoma City I saw a number of pitiable incidents in the 609 courts, in which Indians who couldn't catch hold of the new life were testifying through an interpreter. I know they had been sent to government schools, but they preferred to pretend they didn't know English, rather than to accept the responsibilities of their training. They wished to be thought of as belonging to an older generation that had been denied advantages.

562 The educated young women, too, fell into the dull, dawdling [563] existence led by their men, although I did know two girls, just out of school, who married industrious white men and became hard-working 842 wives, and whose unions prospered financially. (Comanche wives, by the way, seldom bore more than two children, and often only one. But mixed marriages, particularly those of a white man and a Comanche woman, produced fruitfully.)

191 One episode illustrates the attitude of most of the educated women. 129 We had been operating the store several months, and I was proud of my good trade vocabulary. I knew the Comanche name for almost everything in the store that might interest the Indians, and I know their names and designations of money. One day, however, I was neither making myself understood by a very old squaw nor understanding what she was trying to tell me.

The ancient one's patience wore thin, and I am sure the line of chatter flowing from her withered lips in a stream was not complimentary to either my intelligence or my ancestry. Then I was suddenly rescued by a pleasant-faced, nice-mannered young Comanche woman on whom I had waited many times. "She wants coffee," she told me in perfect English.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

115 Choctaw and had served in a Mississippi regiment during the war. He had married a white woman who was a good dressmaker. They decided to see the West from a covered wagon. When they got to North Texas, they began working at the different ranches. His wife would do sewing for the womenfolks, and our narrator would work as a ranch hand.

In due time, they drifted to the Comanche country and worked 643 for Quanah Parker. Chief Parker was running both cattle and horses [231] on his ranch and was in need of a rider. The cowboy's wife sewed for the womenfolks. But Chief Parker was having trouble. A young 643 Texan named Emmet Cox was running some long-horned steers on 593 Comanche graze, and this personable young cattleman was wanting 584 to marry one of Quanah's daughters, named Nau-noc-ca.

Chief Parker was willing, the bridegroom was eager; it was Nau-noc-ca who was holding up the parade. She was a new kind of a Comanche girl to her father. He was chief of all the Comanches, and from time to time he was called to Washington to confer with the President of the United States; but he no longer ruled his own household.

When he told one of his daughters to marry this white man by a Comanche ceremony, she said no. And she kept on saying no. This was something the chief couldn't understand—a no, coming from one of his own womenfolks.

643 Nau-noc-ca had been attending the school for Indians at Carlisle, 593 Pennsylvania, and she was doing her own thinking and planning. 584 177 Somewhere during her schooling she made the discovery that she was her own woman. She had no objections to the bridegroom. It is very possible she was flattered to be the choice of this well-to-do young white man. She had been educated in the white man's school at Carlisle, in the white man's ways. She herself was one-quarter white, and she was marrying a white man. Why shouldn't she be dressed as a white bride would dress, and be married by a white minister? These were her demands.

All the commands of her father, all the pleadings of her intended husband and attempted persuadings by her mother, Wec-ke-ah, went for naught. She had lost all fear of disobeying her father, and her 643 decision was final. A white bride's trousseau, a wedding like a white 593 woman's wedding with a white Christian minister, or no wedding.

585 177 Quanah and the groom surrendered. Our Indian cowboy's wife